

Falls Church, Virginia 20530

File: D2015-042

Date: APR 9 2015

In re: ALMA CELESTE DEFILLO, ATTORNEY

IN PRACTITIONER DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

FINAL ORDER OF DISCIPLINE

ON BEHALF OF EOIR: Jennifer J. Barnes, Disciplinary Counsel

ON BEHALF OF DHS: George R. Martin
Appellate & Protection Law Section
Office of the Principal Legal Advisor
Immigration Law and Practice Division
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Jeannette V. Dever, Legal Fellow
Immigration Law and Practice Division
Office of the Principal Legal Advisor
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

The respondent will be suspended from practice before the Board, the Immigration Courts, and the Department of Homeland Security (the "DHS") for one year.

On January 23, 2015, the Supreme Court of Florida suspended the respondent from the practice of law in Florida, for one year, effective on February 23, 2015. Consequently, on February 20, 2015, the Disciplinary Counsel for the Executive Office for Immigration Review petitioned for the respondent's immediate suspension from practice before the Board of Immigration Appeals and the Immigration Courts. The DHS then asked that the respondent be similarly suspended from practice before that agency. We granted the petition for immediate suspension on March 19, 2015.

The respondent was required to file a timely answer to the allegations contained in the Notice of Intent to Discipline but has failed to do so. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 1003.105 (2013). The respondent's failure to file a response within the time period prescribed in the Notice constitutes an admission of the allegations therein, and the respondent is now precluded from requesting a hearing on the matter. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.105 (2013).

The Notice proposes that the respondent be suspended from practicing before the Board and the Immigration Courts for a period of one year. Because the respondent has failed to file an answer, the regulations direct the Board to adopt the proposed sanction contained in the Notice, unless there are considerations that compel us to digress from that proposal. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.105 (2013).

The proposed sanction is appropriate in light of the fact that on January 23, 2015, the Supreme Court of Florida suspended the respondent from the practice of law in Florida, for one year, effective on February 23, 2015. Because the respondent is currently under our March 19, 2015, order of suspension, we will deem the respondent's suspension to have commenced on that date.

ORDER: The Board hereby suspends the respondent from practice before the Board, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS for one year.

FURTHER ORDER: The respondent is instructed to maintain compliance with the directives set forth in our prior order. The respondent is also instructed to notify the Board of any further disciplinary action against her.

FURTHER ORDER: The respondent may petition this Board for reinstatement to practice before the Board, Immigration Courts, and DHS under 8 C.F.R. § 1003.107 (2013).

FURTHER ORDER: As the Board earlier imposed an immediate suspension order in this case, today's order of the Board becomes effective immediately. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.105(d)(2) (2013).



FOR THE BOARD